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TO 3600 MAIL ROOM

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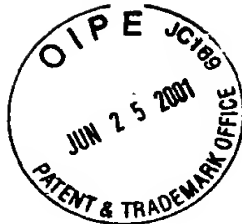
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| | First Named Inventor | SAPOTY BROOK | |
| | Group Art Unit | | |
| | Examiner Name | | |
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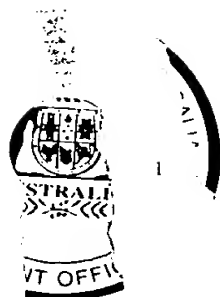
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I, GAYE TURNER, TEAM LEADER EXAMINATION SUPPORT AND SALES hereby certify that annexed is a true copy of the Provisional specification in connection with Application No. PQ 6944 for a patent by SAPOTY BROOK filed on 18 April 2000.

WITNESS my hand this
Twelfth day of April 2001

GAYE TURNER
TEAM LEADER EXAMINATION
SUPPORT AND SALES



AUSTRALIA
Patents Act 1990

**PROVISIONAL SPECIFICATION
STANDARD PATENT**

A CONVERTIBLE INFLATABLE FURNISHING

The invention is described in the following statement:

This invention relates to improvements in inflatable furniture.

Beanbag chairs have been popular for many years as a low cost furnishing. However the plastic beans get squashed and the beanbag needs refilling with plastic beans every few months. Inflatable chairs have recently become more popular. In addition, there is increasing interest in healthy activities such as massage and stretching. Massage tables can be relatively expensive and take up significant indoor space. Folding massage tables are heavy and not easy to fold, carry or travel with.

These problems are overcome by the present invention, which provides a convertible inflatable furnishing which comprises an inflated base providing a degree of stability and comfort for a person sitting on the base and an inflatable backrest fixed to the base and an air passage between the base and the backrest and a retaining means wherein the air in the backrest can be squeezed out of the backrest through the air passage into the base and the retaining means can be operated to retain the backrest in a substantially unerect state enabling use of the base for various purposes including body therapies in situations where a protruding backrest is inconvenient.

The invention optionally includes variants:

wherein the backrest is positioned at one edge of the base upper surface,

wherein the deflated backrest can be inserted into the base and the retaining means retains the backrest substantially inside the base,

wherein the volume of air in the inflated backrest is sufficient to vary the inflation of the base from firm when the backrest is empty to soft when the backrest is full,

wherein the outer shape of the base has a horizontal width greater than 600 mm enabling the base upper surface to puff upward beside the outer sides of a sitter's thighs thereby providing armrests,

wherein the air passage is provided by providing a part of the base and the backrest with a single bladder,

wherein a cover is provided to cover at least part of the bladder,

wherein the bladder is fully enclosed by the cover and the shape of the cover substantially determines the shape of the furnishing,

wherein the deflated base can be fully inserted into the deflated backrest,

wherein a fastening means is provided to retain the deflated base inside the deflated backrest for the purposes of packing and portability,

wherein the fastening means is also the retaining means,

wherein a connecting means is provided to connect a region of the base upper surface to a region of the base lower surface to substantially reduce horizontal mobility of the base upper surface and to reduce or eliminate convexity of the base upper surface thereby providing a more stable seat,

wherein the connecting means includes an elastic material of sufficient tensile strength and elasticity to absorb pressure shocks resulting from sudden loads applied to the furnishing,

wherein the bladder is substantially tubular and the axis of the tubular bladder is curved around the axis defined by the connecting means so that the ends of the tubular bladder partially overlap,

wherein one end of the bladder protrudes upward into the backrest when the backrest is erect,

wherein the end of the bladder protruding into the backrest is shaped similarly to the backrest but is larger than the backrest so that the bladder rapidly erects the backrest when the retaining means is released and a load is applied to the base,

wherein the outer shape of the base has an horizontal dimension of between 700 mm and 1000 mm enabling the base when tilted onto a side to support the torso of a person at a height where massage and other body manipulation and stretching is facilitated,

wherein a small cushion or region of padding is provided on the side of the base for the chin-tip of a person lying prostrate along the side of the base,

wherein the bladder is made from a gas impermeable material such as PVC or a nylon-polyethylene lamination,

wherein the cord is a polyamide and rubber shock absorbing cord.

A purpose of the convertible furnishing described herein is to provide a comfortable, light, aesthetic and affordable armchair. The provision of a strong fabric outer cover enables a lightweight bladder constructed from non-PVC, more environmentally friendly, plastic to be used.

A purpose of the convertible furnishing described herein is to provide a massage support structure. The curved structure stretches the torso on the upper side enabling deep massage and simultaneously stretching muscles and connective tissue similarly to yogic practices.

The convex lying surface allows nurturing postures similar to those experienced in infancy on the mother's body. The inflexible inflated structure allows a greater degree of displacement or pulsation to be introduced into the massage than is possible on standard massage tables.

In the prostrate position the head may hang with the chin resting gently. This allows the face to be easily included in the massage.

In addition, the convertible furnishing has an ultra-light deflatable construction which can be folded into itself for easy transportation.

The convertible furnishing can be used for massage, stretching, relaxation, floatation, and children's and adult's recreation.

Figure 1 shows an elevation view of an embodiment of the convertible furnishing with a backrest erect.

Figure 2 shows an elevation view of the embodiment of the convertible furnishing placed on its side with the backrest unerect.

Figure 3 shows an cross-sectional view of the embodiment of the convertible furnishing with the internal spatial arrangement of the bladder indicated.

An embodiment of the convertible inflatable furnishing as shown in figures 1 and 2 for sitting and other uses comprises an inflated base 1 providing a degree of stability and comfort for a person sitting on the base 1 and an inflatable backrest 2 fixed to the base 1 and an air passage 3 between the base 1 and the backrest 2 and a retaining means 4 wherein the air in the backrest can be squeezed out of the backrest through the air passage 3 into the base 1 and the retaining means 4 can be operated to retain the backrest 2 in a substantially unerect state 5 shown in FIG 2 enabling use of the base 1

for various purposes including body therapies in situations where a protruding backrest is inconvenient.

Figure 2 shows the embodiment of the convertible furnishing tilted on its side 6 with the deflated backrest 2 inserted into the base 1 and hook and loop press-seal retaining means 4 (e.g. Velcro) retaining the backrest substantially inside the base 1.

Figure 3 shows the interior of the embodiment revealing that the base 1 and the backrest 2 share a single bladder 8 and a fabric cover 9 is provided to cover the entire bladder 8. The shape of the cover 9 substantially determines the shape of the furnishing.

In this embodiment a connecting means 11 shown in figure 2 and 3 is provided to connect the center of the base upper surface 17 to the center of the base lower surface 16 by a cord loop 12 about 100 mm long to substantially reduce horizontal mobility of the base upper surface 17 and to reduce or eliminate convexity of the base upper surface 17 thereby providing a more stable seat. The cord loop 12 is an elastic material of sufficient tensile strength and elasticity to absorb pressure shocks resulting from sudden loads applied to the furnishing.

In this embodiment the bladder 8 is substantially tubular. The tubular bladder follows a curved path 18 around the axis defined by the connecting means 11. The curved dashed line shown in figure 3 indicates this curved path 18. The bladder 8 is sufficiently long that the ends of the tubular bladder abutt each other. Part of one end of the bladder 13 protrudes upward into the backrest when the backrest 2 is erect.

The end of the bladder protruding into the backrest 13 is shaped similarly to the backrest 2 but is larger than the backrest 2 so that the bladder 8 fully erects and fills the backrest 2 when the retaining means 4 is released and a load is applied to the base 1.

In this embodiment the deflated base 1 can be fully inserted into the deflated backrest 2 and the retaining means flap 10 shown in figure 1 and 2 can be folded open and the retaining means 4 press-sealed to retain the deflated base 1 inside the deflated backrest 2 for the purposes of packing and portability.

In this embodiment in the state shown in figure 1 the outer shape of the base 1 has a horizontal width of about 850 mm enabling the base upper surface 17 to puff upward beside the outer sides of a sitter's thighs thereby providing armrests 7.

In this embodiment the outer shape of the base 1 as shown in figure 1 has an horizontal dimension of about 850mm enabling the base 1 to be tilted onto a side 6 to provide support for the torso of a person at a height where massage and other body manipulation and stretching is facilitated.

In this embodiment a 100 mm diameter lenticular cushion is provided for the chin-tip of a person lying prostrate along the side 6. As shown in figure 3 a zip 14 is provided on the base lower surface 16 for internal access and a nozzle 15 is provided near the zip 14 for inflating and deflating the bladder 8.

In this embodiment the inflated backrest 2 is sufficiently flexible to allow the occupant to sit up or lay back at a wide range of angles.

In this embodiment about half the air can be released so that the furnishing can be used as a seat supporting the occupant similarly to a bean bag seat.

(Name of Applicant)

(Date)

ABSTRACT

A convertible inflatable furnishing is disclosed. The furnishing can form a chair shape that can be converted into a supportive shape for massage and stretching by deflating and securing the backrest inside the furnishing.

Figure 1.

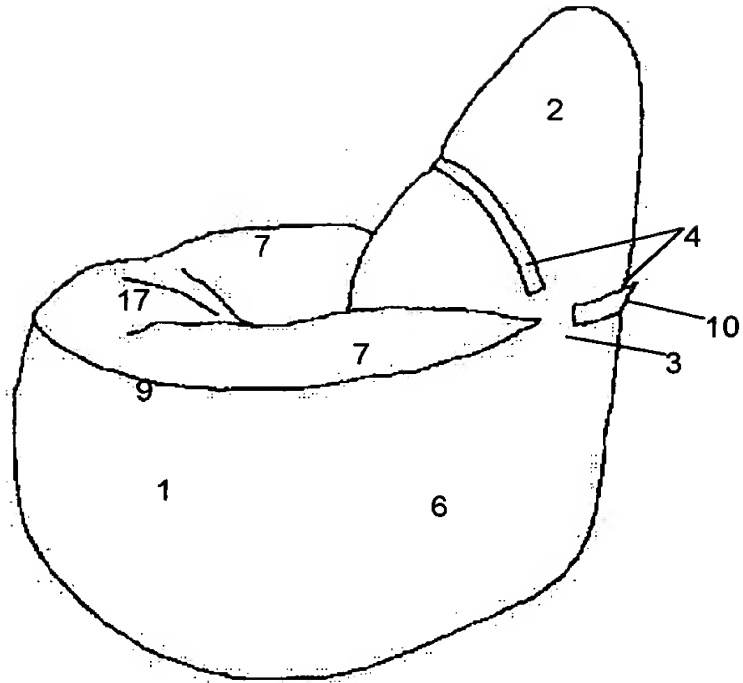


Figure 2.

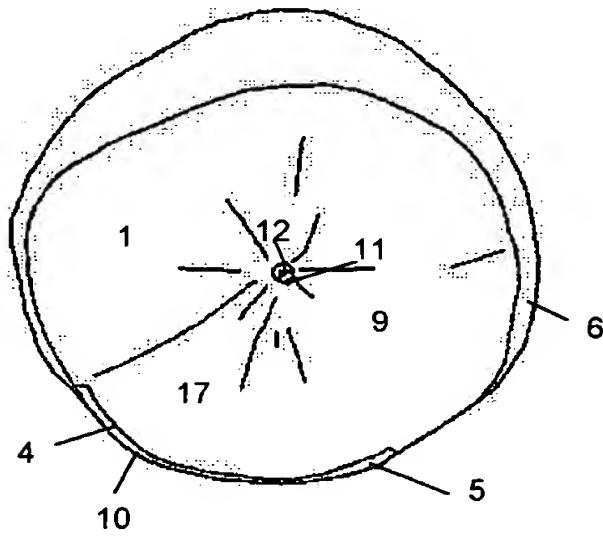


Figure 3.

